



# CITY OF LODI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**AGENDA TITLE:** Consider Disbandment of Budget and Finance Committee  
**MEETING DATE:** November 17, 2010  
**PREPARED BY:** City Clerk

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Consider disbandment of Budget and Finance Committee.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** At the request of the Mayor and Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, this item was brought forward for Council consideration. A seven-member Budget and Finance Committee was created in 2005 to advise the City Manager and City Council on finance-related topics. Since that time, the Committee was reduced to five members. Currently the Committee has only two members remaining.

Since its inception, the Committee has had difficulty retaining membership and filling vacancies. During the last year alone, four members resigned at various times, some serving less than a few months. Vacancies were posted for the initial 30-day period four times. Vacancies were reposted for an additional 30-day period four times. And, twice vacancies were posted as "open until filled" with an indefinite application period. In addition, there has been discussion since the Committee's formation regarding the purpose of the Committee. For the above-referenced reasons, it is requested that the City Council consider disbandment of the Budget and Finance Committee if deemed appropriate.

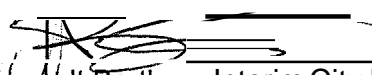
**FISCAL IMPACT:** Monthly cost savings by way of staff time of approximately 10-15 hours.

**FUNDING AVAILABLE:** Not Applicable.

  
Randi Johl, City Clerk

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APPROVED:

  
Konradt Bartlam, Interim City Manager

**John Beckman**  
2058 Incline Drive  
Lodi, CA 95242

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November 17, 2010

Mayor Phil Katzakian  
City of Lodi  
221 W. Pine St.  
Lodi, CA 95240.

RE: Lodi Budget and Finance Committee

Mayor Katzakian,

I am saddened to see the Council is considering the disbandment of the Lodi Budget and Finance Committee. Far more troubling to me are the comments of former members of this committee who express ~~frustration~~ from their experience on this committee. Based on the comments from these former members it appears the committee was never allowed broad discretion to analyze and review the ~~financial~~ operations of the City. Furthermore, based on these comments it appears the committee was never given a role to play in the budgeting process of the City. Should the Council choose to eliminate this committee it **will** be a lost opportunity to improve the relationship between citizens and City government and a lost opportunity for the Council to have assistance in their duty to oversee the finances of the City.

Several ~~months~~ ago when I learned there was an opening on the Budget and Finance Committee I submitted my application for appointment to the committee. I would like to again offer my service to the City and request appointment to the Budget and Finance Committee.

I also ask that you keep the Budget and Finance Committee with the intent of incorporating this group of citizen volunteers into the early budgeting process and give ~~them~~ a legitimate role in the review of city finances.

As a suggestion, the Committee could receive preliminary department budgets and offered a brief presentation from each department **prior** to the Shirtsleeve sessions where this information is presented to Council. The comments from the Budget and Finance Committee would then be incorporated into the presentations to Council. Another suggestion could be for the Committee to make an annual report to the City regarding the financial operations of the City based on the work **of** the committee in reviewing operations of individual departments.

Potentially these two activities of the Committee could offer additional cost saving measures, recommendations for improvements, fresh ideas or just additional affirmation that the City is utilizing its resources efficiently.

Thank you for your consideration,

  
John R. Beckman